

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A consumable management device comprising:
2 an interface configured to receive a first message including a first
3 designation identifying an imaging consumable used by an image forming device
4 to form hard images; and
5 processing circuitry coupled with the interface, the processing
6 circuitry being configured to convert the first designation identifying the imaging
7 consumable to a second designation identifying the imaging consumable, to
8 generate a second message including the second designation, and to forward the
9 second message to the interface for communication to an entity for assisting with
10 replenishment of the imaging consumable.

1 2. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the interface
2 is configured to receive another first message including another first designation
3 identifying another imaging consumable, and the processing circuitry is configured
4 to convert the another first designation into another second designation identifying
5 the another imaging consumable, and to generate the second message comprising
6 a list including the second designations.

1 3. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to generate the second message comprising a quantity
3 corresponding to the imaging consumable identified by the second designation.

1 4. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to generate the second message comprising an email
3 message and to include the second designation as an attachment of the email.

1 5. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to convert the first designation comprising a manufacturer
3 part number for the imaging consumable to the second designation comprising a
4 customer part number for the imaging consumable.

1 6. The device in accordance with claim 1 further comprising
2 storage circuitry configured to store a look-up table, and the processing circuitry
3 is configured to access the look-up table to convert the first designation to the
4 second designation.

1 7. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to export the second designations into one of a plurality of
3 formats corresponding to the entity to generate the second message.

1 8. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to communicate the second message at a predetermined
3 moment in time.

1 9. An image forming system comprising:
2 an image forming device configured to use an imaging consumable
3 to form hard images, to monitor the status of the imaging consumable, and to
4 generate a first message including a first designation identifying the imaging
5 consumable responsive to the monitoring; and

6 a consumable management device coupled with the image forming
7 device and configured to receive the first message, to convert the first designation
8 identifying the imaging consumable to a second designation identifying the imaging
9 consumable, and to communicate a second message including the second
10 designation to an entity for assisting with replenishment of the imaging
11 consumable.

1 10. The system in accordance with claim 9 wherein the
2 consumable management device is configured to receive another first message
3 including another first designation identifying another imaging consumable, to
4 convert the another first designation into another second designation identifying
5 the another imaging consumable, and to generate the second message comprising
6 a list including the second designations.

1 11. The system in accordance with claim 9 wherein the
2 consumable management device is configured to generate the second message
3 comprising an email message and to include the second designation as an
4 attachment of the email.

1 12. The system in accordance with claim 9 wherein the
2 consumable management device is configured to covert the first designation
3 comprising a manufacturer part number for the imaging consumable to the second
4 designation comprising a customer part number for the imaging consumable.

1 13. The system in accordance with claim 9 wherein the image
2 forming device comprises a printer.

1 14. A method of replenishing an imaging consumable usable to
2 form hard images, the method comprising:

3 receiving a first message including a first designation identifying the
4 imaging consumable;

5 converting the first designation to a second designation different than
6 the first designation, the second designation identifying the imaging consumable;

7 generating a second message including the second designation; and

8 communicating the second message including the second designation
9 to an entity for assisting with replenishment of the imaging consumable.

1 15. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 generating comprises generating the second message comprising a list including
3 a plurality of different second designations identifying a plurality of different
4 respective imaging consumables.

1 16. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 generating comprises generating the second message including a quantity
3 corresponding to the imaging consumable identified by the second designation.

1 17. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 generating comprises:
3 generating the second message comprising an email message; and
4 providing the second designation as an attachment of the email
5 message.

1 18. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 converting comprises converting the first designation comprising a manufacturer
3 part number for the imaging consumable to the second designation comprising a
4 customer part number for the imaging consumable.

1 19. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 generating comprises exporting the second designation into one of a plurality of
3 formats corresponding to the entity.

1 20. The method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the
2 communicating comprises communicating at a predetermined moment in time.